

PGY2 Pharmacy Residency: Mental Health

VA North Texas Health Care System

Program Director: Kristen Backe, PharmD, BCPP



The PGY2 mental health specialty residency is supported by the VA North Texas Healthcare System. The residency is designed to produce clinical pharmacists who are competent to practice in inpatient and outpatient settings involving psychiatric pharmacotherapy. A psychiatric pharmacist should possess a mastery of clinical skills needed to optimize pharmacologic therapy to treat patients with psychiatric and neuropsychiatric disorders in various mental health settings. This residency provides the environment necessary to achieve the knowledge and skills needed to care for patients with a wide range of disorders. The program will foster the development of an independent, versatile practitioner. The program is also designed to produce well rounded, independent professionals through experiences in teaching, research, and professional activities.

General Description

The 12-month program is designed to lead the resident through a variety of rotational and longitudinal learning experiences in a variety of practice settings. By the end of the program, the resident should feel competent practicing in inpatient and outpatient settings involving psychiatric pharmacotherapy. The residency includes core rotations that are chosen to establish a strong base in in psychiatric and neuropsychiatric pharmacotherapy. Core disorders within this residency include depression, bipolar disorder, posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), schizophrenia, dementia, anxiety disorders, personality disorders, and substance use disorders. The resident may choose electives based on their career goals. Although the residency is designed around core and elective rotational and or longitudinal learning experiences, the focus of the training will be to master each of the diseases and conditions established within the ASHP required competency areas, goals, and objectives for PGY2 psychiatric pharmacy residencies.

Program Goals

Practice Excellence

- Develop a mastery of knowledge base in psychiatric pharmacotherapy
- Develop solid patient care skills in both acute and chronic care settings
- Develop a sound understanding of pharmacy practice management
- Establish oneself as an integral member of the health care team

Scholastic Excellence

- Demonstrate proficiency in teaching in both didactic and small group learning environments
- Develop effective precepting skills
- Generate new knowledge in psychiatric pharmacotherapy
- Interpret and disseminate knowledge in psychiatric pharmacotherapy

Individual Excellence

- Develop a system of self-assessment and development
- Demonstrate exemplary verbal and written communication skills
- Utilize a system for balancing multiple work-related and personal responsibilities
- Understand the importance of professionalism through participation in pharmacy

Program Activities

Required Longitudinal Activities

- Medication education groups
- Teaching activities
- Research/journal clubs/MUE

Required Learning Experiences

- Acute Care
- Inpatient Geriatric Psychiatry
- Mental Health Intensive Case Management
- Outpatient Mental Health
- Primary Care – Mental Health Integration (PCMHI)
- Substance Use Disorders

Elective Rotations

- Correctional Healthcare Mental Health (through Parkland Health) *
- MH Consultation Team/Emergency Department
- OEF/OIF Trauma Clinic
- Pain Management
- New elective learning experiences may be developed based on resident interests/career goals

* Texas pharmacist license required for non-VA learning experiences

Teaching Activities

Teaching activities for residents are designed to complement practice activities while allowing the resident to experience a variety of teaching methods. Residents will be required to demonstrate skills necessary to function in an academic setting by completing the following activities:

Clinician-Educator Training Program

Structured throughout the residency, this program provides training for residents who are interested in developing their academic skills. The major goal of the training program is to supplement a strong clinical background with the skills needed to become a successful educator. The program includes didactic and web-based teaching models, mentored facilitator training for small-group problem-based learning, and precepting of third and fourth-year Doctor of Pharmacy students. Residents also receive instruction in grant writing, statistics, and clinical trial design; submit a project proposal to the institutional review board; and collect, interpret, and publish their results. Additional activities to enhance discovery, integration, and writing skills are described. The program also includes innovative discussion topics based upon needs previously identified by new faculty members. Examples include handling difficult students, writing test questions, developing consistent evaluation methods, and balancing life outside of career.

Experiential Teaching

Clerkship teaching (involving both P3 and/or P4 PharmD students) is integrated into the resident practice model. Early in the program, the resident will observe faculty clerkship preceptors and become integrated into various aspects of clerkship teaching. By the end of the residency program, residents have the opportunity to independently precept clerkship students.

Residency Project

Residents will complete one research project per year. Residents have the option to also complete a quality improvement project. Residents may choose any type of research project or quality improvement program, provided that the project:

- 1) includes generation of original data;
- 2) is suitable for publication or presentation at a national pharmacy meeting;
- 3) can reasonably be completed within the residency year.

Additional Activities

Resident Rounds Seminar Series

Residents will present a formal 45-minute presentation with 15 minutes for questions and answers to VANTHCS pharmacy staff in the fall. Residents must choose topics that are of sufficient controversy or debate that are candidates for further publication in the medical literature. These presentations are accredited for 1 hour of CE credit for pharmacists and pharmacy technicians.

VISN 17 Psychiatric Pharmacy Didactics Series

Residents may participate in weekly psychiatric pharmacy didactics discussions. These discussions are presented by VISN 17 pharmacy residents with participation, feedback, and evaluation provided by pharmacy residents and Mental Health Clinical Pharmacy Specialists. Each 60-minute session consists of a 40-minute presentation of an assigned topic and 15-20 minutes for questions and discussion. Residents will be assigned three topics each to present throughout the year but are expected to attend all of the weekly presentations.

College of Psychiatric and Neurologic Pharmacists (CPNP) Annual Meeting

Residents are encouraged to attend the CPNP annual meeting and present their research during the poster session. This meeting also provides interactive lectures for practice development and networking opportunities.

Southwestern Leadership Conference (ALCALDE)

Residents are encouraged to participate in this regional resident meeting, also known as ALCALDE, in the spring. Residents have the opportunity to present their project results for evaluation. This meeting also provides an opportunity to network and interact with residents from other programs throughout the region.

Poster Presentation

Residents are required to present a poster of their research project at a national (preferred) or state professional meeting. In addition, a presentation towards the end of the residency year at our local facility may also be required.

Resident Interviews

Residents may be asked to participate in the interview process for the PGY2 MH residency program.

Program Leadership



Kristen Backe, PharmD, BCPP

Mental Health Clinical Pharmacist Practitioner
RPD PGY2 Mental Health Residency Program
Practice site: VA North Texas Health Care System

Dr. Kristen Backe is a board-certified Mental Health Clinical Pharmacist Practitioner in the Primary Care-Mental Health Integration (PCMHI) clinic at the VA North Texas Healthcare System. She received her Doctor of Pharmacy degree from Butler University in Indianapolis, Indiana. She then went on to complete a PGY1 Pharmacy Residency at CoxHealth System in Springfield, Missouri, and a PGY2 Psychiatric Residency at Seton Healthcare/University of Texas at Austin before coming to the North Texas VA in Dallas in 2015. Dr. Backe is one of two clinical pharmacy specialists in the PC-MHI clinic where she practices medication therapy management for a variety of mental health disease states including depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, insomnia, substance use disorder, schizophrenia and psychotic disorders, and bipolar disorder. She was honored to be recognized as a PGY1 Preceptor of the Year for 2016-17 and began her role as PGY1 Residency Program Co-Coordinator in July 2017 and will assume the role of PGY2 Mental Health Residency Program Director in 2022. Dr. Backe is also a member of the College of Psychiatric and Neurologic Pharmacists (CPNP).



Martein Lewis, PharmD, MS in Healthcare Informatics, BCPP

VISN17 Academic Detailing Program Manager
PGY2 Mental Health Residency Program Coordinator

Dr. Martein Lewis is a Board-Certified Psychopharmacologist currently working as a VISN17 Academic Detailing Program Manager while serving as the Residency Program Coordinator for the PGY2 Mental Health Residency program. Prior to her current position, she practiced as a mental health clinical pharmacy practitioner at the Fort Worth Outpatient clinic. She graduated from Prairie View A&M University then obtained her Doctorate in Pharmacy from the University of the Incarnate Word. Before starting her career at the VA, she practiced as a district liaison working in retail pharmacy management at Target pharmacy before completing her PGY1 Ambulatory Care Residency at the Phoenix VA and her PGY2 Psychiatric Residency at the Eastern Colorado VA. Due to her longstanding passion to optimize

technology to better patient care, she most recently obtained her Masters in Healthcare Informatics from the University of San Diego. She believes in the importance of self-care, normalizing mental health, promoting the value of pharmacists, and helping underserved communities in any way. Outside of pharmacy, she enjoys laughing with her husband and 90-lb mastiff, all things food-related, and catching up on her favorite TV shows and movies.

Information for Applicants

Qualifications

Residency applicants must have a Doctor of Pharmacy (PharmD) degree from an ACPE accredited pharmacy school and be eligible for enrollment in the Veterans Administration and Texas Tech University HSC School of Pharmacy, as well as completion of an ASHP accredited PGY1 residency. The applicant must hold an active registered pharmacist license from a state within the United States, but a Texas pharmacist license is not required.

Residency Program Contact Information

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